THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

The service ordinarily begins with the Votum and Sentences, followed by the singing of praise. Or it may begin with the Hymn, especially if it is a processional, which then may be followed by the Votum and Sentences. The congregation being assembled, the minister shall solemnly call the people to worship saying:

Let us worship God.

Votum

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. AMEN.

Or,

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Sentences

With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Or,

O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy dwelling! Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy.

Or,

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Other sentences, especially those appropriate to the Church Year, may be used.

Salutation

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP, 1968 1
Or,

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shine in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**Hymn of Praise**

*The Hymn may be followed by a prayer of supplication for grace to worship aright, or of adoration, or the minister may proceed directly to the Prayer of Confession.*

**Prayer of Confession**

*The minister may introduce the prayer by saying:*

Dearly Beloved, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Let us pray:

*Or,*

Let us confess our sins to almighty God:

Have mercy upon us, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. For we acknowledge our transgressions: and our sin is ever before us. Create in us a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within us. Cast us not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from us. Restore unto us the joy of thy salvation; and uphold us with thy free spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Or,*

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. Amen.
Or,

Almighty and most merciful father, we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O Most Merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

The following or other suitable response may then be said or sung:

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Words of Assurance

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. Believe this Gospel, and go forth to live in peace.

Or,

With everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer. I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. Return to me, for I have redeemed you. Believe this Gospel and go forth to live in peace.

Law of God and/or Summary

As in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Law follows the forgiveness of sin. The Law and/or Summary may be read here or before the Prayer of Confession.

God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, who brought
you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor’s.

**Summary of the Law**

Hear also what our Lord Jesus Christ says: You shall love the Lord your
God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

**Psalter and Gloria Patri**

*To express thanksgiving for the promised forgiveness, the Psalter and Gloria Patri or an appropriate hymn may be used.*

**A Prayer for Illumination**

*This prayer may be said before the reading of Scripture or before the sermon.*

**Lessons**

*There will ordinarily be two lessons, the first from the Old Testament, or from a portion of the New Testament other than the Gospels. The second lesson may most fittingly be read from one of the Gospels. Before reading the lesson, let the minister say:*

The lesson from the Old Testament (or New Testament; or Epistle; or Gospel) is written in the book of ______, the ___ chapter, beginning to read at the ___ verse.

*After the reading of the second lesson the minister may say:*

Thanks be to God for his holy Word, and to his name be glory and praise. Amen.

**Confession of Faith**

*The Confession of Faith may be made here or after the Prayer for Blessing on the Word. The minister may introduce the Confession of Faith by saying:*

Let us make confession of our Christian faith, in the words of the Nicene (or Apostles’) Creed:

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, begotten of his father before all worlds; God of God; light of light; very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven; and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Ghost; the Lord and giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And we believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Or,

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn

Sermon

Prayer for Blessing on the Word

Offering
The movement of service now goes from the pulpit to the table, where the minister will receive the offering of the people, after the singing of the

Doxology

Or another appropriate response may be used. After the response the congregation may be seated and the ushers return to their places.

General Prayers

While at the table, the minister shall lead in prayers of thanksgiving and of intercession, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer. The following prayers may be used.

Holy and right it is and our joyful duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. For he has redeemed us from death and destruction, and on this day did rise gloriously from the dead, and has given us the blessed hope of everlasting life.

O God, in glory exalted, and in mercy ever blessed, we magnify thee, we praise thee, we give thanks to thee for all thy bountiful providence, for all the blessings of this present life, and for the hope of a better life yet to come. Let the memory of thy goodness fill our hearts with joy and thankfulness; and let no unworthiness of ours provoke thee to withhold from us any needed good, seeing that all our blessings come not by our desert, but only through the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, who has taught us to make intercession for all men, we pray not only for ourselves here present, but for all thy children of every nation, tribe, and tongue. We pray for all who are without the blessed light of the Gospel. May it please thee to speed thy Church in its mission to make thy truth known to all men, thy saving health to all nations. Give strength to all who are engaged in the ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing.

We pray for thy Church of every name and every rite, the whole family of thy people who worship thee in spirit and in truth. May all thy ministers and people be found faithful in life and doctrine, and by them may all who have wandered and gone astray be brought safely back to the fold.

Direct and govern, we pray thee, all who are engaged in the tasks of government. We pray for thy blessing on thy servant the President of the United
States, and all others to whom the people have entrusted power and authority. Let thy fatherly favor so preserve them that true religion may be preserved in our land and the people abide in righteousness and peace.

Finally, we offer to thee in the silence of our hearts our petitions for those near and dear to us, and for all who are in need of our prayers. (Silence) Be with them and help them, we pray thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all glory, dominion, and power, world without end. And now as our Savior has taught us, we humbly pray:

Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn

Benediction

Go in peace. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

Or,

The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

Or,

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

The Benediction is a part of the ministry of the Word and should be said from the chancel or pulpit. It should be chosen from Apostolic or other Scriptural blessings.

An anthem or other suitable music may be sung after the Psalter and Gloria, before the sermon, or during the offering.